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In Smuggling Case

Writer Says Service Warned in Arrests

CPYRGHT

An aviation writer who has worked for the Central Intelligence Agency testified in Federal Court Thursday he once warned Air Force Intelligence that the arrest of four men on charges of conspiring to smuggle bombers abroad "was going to put the United States in a very embarrassing position."

Martin Caidin, author of about 50 books and a frequent consultant to the Air Force, appeared as a defense witness in the trial of John R. Hawke, 28, of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and Count Henri M. F. deMontmarin, 58, of Paris.

Hawke and deMontmarin are charged with conspiring to smuggle seven World War II type B26 bombers to Portugal, two of them via Western New York. Charges against two other defendants have been dismissed.

Caidin, a long-time friend of Hawke, urged the former RAF pilot to accept the job of ferrying bombers. Previous testimony indicated Caidin himself wanted to ferry a bomber in the belief the project had the permission of the U.S. government.

Edwin Marger, attorney for Hawke, has contended the Central Intelligence Agency knew the bombers were being flown to Portugal and secretly approved the scheme because they were to be used against Communist-backed rebels in Portuguese Africa.

CIA Involved?

"Do you know if the CIA was actively involved in this?" Marger asked Caidin.

"I was told by Gregory Board

it was so, and I know from my own contacts with the CIA that all operations against Communist activities outside the United States must go through the CIA," Caidin said.

Board, 45, of Tucson, Ariz., is the alleged ring leader of the bomber operation. He was indicted with the other four, but fled the country.

Caidin testified that after he warned that the United States was going to be embarrassed he was told by an Air Force man to "stop rocking the boat." The Air Force has been warned away from the case, Caidin said he was told.

The witness also testified he had a similar conversation with a CIA contact. "I said someone was going to blow the lid off this—make it public," Caidin testified. The CIA man said he would "look into it," the writer said.

In cross examination, U.S. Attorney John T. Curtin brought out that in September, 1965, after the arrests, Caidin had voluntarily given a statement to customs on behalf of Hawke. This was about the same time as the conversations with the CIA and the Air Force.

"You didn't say then that Board told you in February the CIA was in this?" Curtin asked.

"No," Caidin answered.

Transcript Introduced

Curtin introduced into evidence a transcript of Caidin's statement to customs which quoted the author as saying:

"The only dealings I know of were with the Portuguese government. I don't know of any other machinations with the U.S. government."

Caidin admitted this had been his statement at the time.